

Mineral Industry Surveys

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BISMUTH IN THE SECOND QUARTER 2006

Total bismuth consumption in the United States for the second quarter of 2006 was 598 metric tons (t), which was about 2% above that in the second quarter of 2005, according to estimates compiled by the U.S. Geological Survey. The estimated consumption breakdown for bismuth in the second quarter was about 45% for metallurgical additives and galvanizing; 37% for fusible alloys, solders, and ammunition; 16% for chemical and pharmaceutical uses; and 2% for other uses (table 2). Bismuth imports for the first 5 months of 2006 declined by 18% from those in the comparable period of 2005.

The New York dealer price for bismuth, as published in Platts Metals Week, started the month of April at \$4.45 to \$4.70 per pound and drifted somewhat lower during the second quarter, ending June at \$4.20 to \$4.50 per pound.

China's leading bismuth producer, Hunan Shizhuyuan Non-Ferrous Metals Co., announced that it would increase its bismuth concentrate capacity by 80% to 100% when it brings a new concentrator online in October 2006. Construction of the 24,000-metric-ton-per-year concentrator at the firm's Chenzhou Works in Hunan Province started in late 2005. Work on the project has cut the company's current bismuth output an average of 10% to 20% owing to its impact on the existing concentrator (Metal Bulletin, 2006).

Reference Cited

Metal Bulletin, 2006, Shizhuyuan to double bismuth concs capacity: Metal Bulletin, no. 8947, June 5, p. 14.

TABLE 1
SALIENT BISMUTH STATISTICS¹

(Kilograms unless otherwise specified)

	2005	2006	
		First quarter	Second quarter
Consumption	2,280,000	521,000 ^r	598,000
Exports ²	142,000	37,400	19,600 ³
Imports for consumption	2,530,000	483,000	399,000 ³
Price per pound, dealer, average of period	\$3.91	\$4.70	\$4.50
Stocks, end of period, consumer	134,000	129,000	118,000

^rRevised.

¹Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits.

²Comprises bismuth metal and the bismuth content of alloys and waste and scrap.

³Import and export data for June 2006 were not available at time of publication.

TABLE 2
ESTIMATED BISMUTH METAL CONSUMED
IN THE UNITED STATES, BY USE¹

(Kilograms)

Use	2005	2006	
		First quarter	Second quarter
Chemicals ²	500,000	83,500 ^r	95,700
Bismuth alloys	669,000	158,000 ^r	223,000
Metallurgical additives	1,090,000	270,000	270,000
Other	15,700	8,240 ^r	10,200
Total	2,270,000	521,000 ^r	598,000

^rRevised.

¹Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits, may not add totals shown.

²Includes industrial and laboratory chemicals, cosmetics, and pharmaceuticals.

TABLE 3
U.S. EXPORTS OF BISMUTH METAL, ALLOYS AND WASTE AND SCRAP, BY COUNTRY¹

(Kilograms, metal content)

Country	2005	2006				
		March	First quarter	April	May	January-May
Argentina	240	15	15	--	--	15
Belgium	17,000	--	--	--	--	--
Brazil	4,260	20	20	--	--	20
Canada	70,100	10,100	19,800	1,300	3,680	24,700
Chile	1,560	--	916	--	--	916
China	35	--	--	--	--	--
Colombia	39	--	--	--	--	--
Dominican Republic	5,420	6,440	12,500	1,170	13,100	26,800
France	10,100	--	--	--	--	--
Germany	--	--	--	112	--	112
Hong Kong	234	--	--	--	--	--
India	2,000	--	22	--	--	22
Ireland	618	--	--	--	--	--
Italy	50	--	--	--	--	--
Japan	2,100	--	2,020	--	--	2,020
Korea, Republic of	293	--	159	--	--	159
Malaysia	11	--	--	--	--	--
Mexico	17,400	--	1,180	82	107	1,370
Saudi Arabia	--	--	50	--	--	50
Singapore	160	--	--	--	--	--
South Africa	98	--	--	--	--	--
Spain	1,000	--	--	--	--	--
Taiwan	49	--	--	--	--	--
United Kingdom	8,840	728	728	--	--	728
Total	142,000	17,300	37,400	2,670	16,900	56,900

-- Zero.

¹Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 4
U.S. IMPORTS FOR CONSUMPTION OF BISMUTH METAL, BY COUNTRY¹

(Kilograms)

Country	2005	2006				
		March	First quarter	April	May	January-May
Bahamas, The	2,620	527	527	553	--	1,080
Belgium	1,050,000	75,700	177,000	72,500	132,000	382,000
Canada	7,370	--	778	--	1,440	2,220
China	667,000	--	28,700	1,000	40,000	69,700
France	--	--	3	--	--	3
Germany	18,500	--	20	--	--	20
Hong Kong	--	18,200	36,500	--	--	36,500
Italy	106	300	300	--	--	300
Mexico	480,000	40,000	148,000	40,000	60,000	248,000
Netherlands	4	--	6	--	--	6
Spain	700	--	600	--	600	1,200
United Kingdom	304,000	51,100	90,600	24,600	25,500	141,000
Total	2,530,000	186,000	483,000	139,000	260,000	882,000

-- Zero.

¹Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.